

Caernarvon Interagency Advisory Committee Meeting
March 10, 2000
New Orleans District, USACE
Room 386

Bill Good took roll. Those in attendance included:

Bill Good	LDNR, Chairman
David Dawson	Landowner representative
Buddy Pausina	Oyster industry representative
Jim Hasik	Recreational fishermen representative
Clay Cosse'	St. Bernard Parish
Lonnie Serpas	Plaquemines Parish
David Oge'	LDEQ
Glenn Thomas	LDWF
Bruce Baird	USACE
Jeaneane Peckham	EPA
Gerry Bodin	USFWS
Greg Miller	NMFS
Jason Hutten	Congressman Tauzin's office

The representatives from both the shrimping interest and DHH were not in attendance.

Minutes from the last meeting were approved.

Chuck Villarrubia gave a report from the Subcommittee Workshop.

Because the river has remained so low, due to the extensive drought the country is facing, the salinity is very high in the Caernarvon project area. There is currently enough river to flow 2,000 cfs, which is the maximum allowable in the plan for February 15 - March and April. The salinity at the 5 ppt line is in the 15-20 ppt range. Should we flow 4,000 cfs in order to bring the 5ppt line salinities down to the 5 ppt range.

Committee members were given the opportunity to voice their concerns or comments about the flow change idea.

David Oge' - follow consensus and the current plan everyone agreed to. Don't change for special interests. We need good data.

Gerry Bodin - plan can be a flexible one. Current plan can be tested. We need enough data to justify if we need to change. This year is a test of our current flexibility. Does DNR plan to moderate the maximum flow from 4,000-8,000 cfs in the future?

Bill Good - will have to talk to Sec. Caldwell. We will have the Pulsing Study to look at in the future.

David Dawson - this plan is not saving wetlands. We need as much water as possible. We can't satisfy everyone. We're on a crash course, and the landowners are all complaining. We need to open it to 4,000 cfs.

Jeaneane Peckham - EPA's position is to always make full use of the diversion. Would like to see any proposals for increasing flow.

Buddy Pausina - What is the effect of the 4,000 cfs on current conditions at this time?

Greg Miller - current flow schedule was designed to meet salinity targets, and we're not meeting them. Flow as hard as the river will let us.

Bruce Baird - If we're going for a yearly average of 5 ppt, we need to be a little high in the spring. Currently, we are three times the salinity of a normal March. If we were meeting a monthly salinity target instead of being flow-based, we wouldn't be having this discussion right now.

Jim Hasik - We need to use the structure to control current problems instead of locking ourselves in. What is the structure supposed to do for St. Bernard, Plaquemines, and the country? We would like to see land in 20 years.

Shrimpers (not the shrimper rep.) - It is not the plan's fault that we had no water. The grass will be back.

Glenn Thomas - Bruce was right. This is a hybrid plan (flow-based with salinity targets). We are trying to meet multiple goals. Testing the plan is good, but we're not meeting the current caveats. Don't diverge from the current caveats, but we should look at meeting them.

Clay Cosse' - Agree with Glenn. Open to discussion and willing to listen. We should leave the plan as it is but maybe modify the caveats or add a caveat for these extreme cases. We don't want to lose what we have. Maybe we can pulse it for a short time to meet the caveat but not ruin the brown shrimp season.

Chuck Villarubia - Intent of plan footnotes was to set caveats that are salinity-based if the flow-base does not work. Maybe the caveats need to be changed.

Lonnie Serpas - Would like to see flow a good bit higher in March and April.

Bill Good - The current plan is a good one, and the purpose of this committee is to adjust the plan if it is not working. Would like to see the plan change to address the drought but not permanently change.

General Discussion

Greg Miller - Change the plan and flow higher. Go to 4,000 cfs up to May and then go back to salinity targets. If the salinity comes down, follow the caveats.

David Dawson - No less than 4,000 cfs. anytime we can get it.

Kevin Campo - Go to 4,000-6,000 cfs. from October-February.

Gerry Bodin made a motion to modify footnote #4 of the current plan to read, "...up to 4,000 cfs."

The motion was seconded by Clay Cosse'.

Buddy Pausina amended the seconded motion to read, "...up to 4,000 cfs from February-April."

Clay Cosse' amended the motion to add a footnote #5 that reads, "Seek to maintain annual average 5 ppt line, based on a yearly average, and monitor salinities as to promote enhancement of oyster production in the public seed grounds and to achieve other stated benefits of the project, up to 4,000 cfs."

The motion was seconded by Bruce Baird.

The motion passed (9 of 12 voting members voted in favor of the amended motion).

The passed motion reads as follows.

There will be a footnote #5 added to the flow plan that reads, "Seek to maintain annual average 5 ppt line, based on a yearly average, and monitor salinities as to promote enhancement of oyster production in the public seed grounds and to achieve other stated benefits of the project, up to 4,000 cfs." This footnote will take effect from February 15-March and April and will bring the max flow during this time up to 4,000 cfs from 2,000 cfs.